GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1719
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2007
ILL-EFFECTS OF TOBACCO
Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba;Rao Shri Kavuru Samba Siva

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether six million children, aged between 4 to 14 are working full time in the bidi industry as reported in the Hindu dated November 14, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether more than half of Tobacco users are killed due to ill effects of Tobacco in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the concrete steps taken proposed to be taken by the Union Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a)&(b): The Labour Welfare Organisation identifies and issues Identity Cards to Bidi workers who are over the age of 18 years. Data regarding children in the age group of 4-14 is therefore not maintained. As per NSS 50th Round (1993), an estimated 2.25 lakhs children were found to be engaged in bidi making, accounting for about 8.4% of the total labour force employed in bidi manufacturing.

(c)&(d): No centralized data is being maintained regarding number of tobacco users killed due to ill effects of tobacco in the country. However, studies indicate that tobacco consumption is associated with widespread morbidity and mortality and is responsible for majority of the disease burden(s) such as Cancer, Cardio-vascular Diseases and Lung Disorders. It is estimated that 40% health related problems and 50% cancer deaths are associated with consumption of tobacco.

(e)&(f): The Government of India has enacted the "The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003" with the aim of discouraging consumption of tobacco including cigarettes and bidis. The salient provisions include:

i) Prohibition of smoking in a public place.
ii) Prohibition of direct and indirect advertisement of cigarette and other tobacco products.
iii) Prohibition of sale of cigarette and other tobacco products to a person below the age of eighteen years.
iv) Prohibition of sale of tobacco products near the educational institutions.
v) Mandatory depiction of statutory warnings (including pictorial warnings) on tobacco packs.
vi) Mandatory depiction of tar and nicotine contents along with maximum permissible limits on tobacco packs.

The Government of India has launched the new National Tobacco Control Programme to improve awareness and enforcement of the Anti Tobacco Laws. Under the 11th Five Year Plan a budget of approximately Rs. 450 cr. is proposed. It is also proposed to establish the National Tobacco Regulatory Authority to ensure effective implementation of the laws.